[redacted]

20 October 1965

Mr. CLARK. Mr. President, consideration of the Dominican Republic problem leads one inexorably to a consideration of our whole Latin American policy, which I believe is in grave need of overhauling. An excellent article which provides much valuable background on this subject was published in the Monday morning, October 18 issue of the Philadelphia Inquirer, entitled "Cuba and Latin America: Our Neighbors to South." The article, to my way of thinking, is the most balanced, reasonable, and readable summary of the problems which confront us in Latin America that I have seen in a long time, and I ask unanimous consent to have it printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the article was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

CUBA AND LATIN AMERICA: OUR NEIGHBORS TO SOUTH—ECONOMIC GAINS OFFSET BY RISE IN POPULATION

(By Joseph C. Goulden)

Simon Bolivar, dying en route to exile after ending Spanish domination of the South American continent in the 1820's, said bitterly, "America is ungovernable. Those who served the revolution plowed the sea."

After 135 years little has happened to disturb the chilling pessimism of Bolivar's judgment. Latin America remains the New World's problem child. The Alliance for Progress, the United States first earnest effort to lift the bulk of Latins into the modern era, is foundering. The inertia created by decades of maladministration, disorganiza-

tion, and downright poor government is stifling and discouraging, and at the moment seemingly insurmountable.

Latin America is so diverse (280 million persons in 20 nations) as to defy capsulization. Yet certain generalizations hold true for most of its countries:

Under his present government the average Latin (and this excludes a handful of countries notably Mexico) is condemned to poverty, ignorance and hunger—based on normal Western standards.

The nations are writhing on the threshold of the 20th century, and they are going to enter it. Few will emerge as U.S.-patterned democracies; the best the United States can expect is U.S.-oriented governments.

A number of ingredients exist for perversion of Latin nationalism into the state socialism of Cuba, or the anthill collectivization of Communist China and its negation of the human spirit. Other of the ingredients, however, are lacking, and the Latin masses have shown no inclination to unfurl a Red flag.

NEGLECTED NEIGHBORS

If Latin America indeed does tilt to the side of the United States—but this is by no means guaranteed—it could serve as what former Presidential adviser and diplomat Adolf A. Berle calls the principal demographic counterbalance to the rising and somewhat unpredictable power emerging on the Asian mainland.

Two decades of preoccupation with Asia and Europe left an imbalance in U.S. global commitments. Now Europe has stabilized, and the United States is learning in Vietnam the bitter sum of Communist domination of what started as a nationalistic movement.

In July 1964, HUBERT H. HUMPHREY said the United States must seek to avoid a similar impasse in its Latin policy. Writing in Foreign Affairs, the then Senator said:

"Our policy should be designed to discourage intrahemispheric rivalry which would Balkenize the continent, as well as to prevent Communist subversion which would divide the hemisphere into an endless struggle between Communist and non-Communist states."

The United States has both inherent advantages and disadvantages in dealing with Latin Americans. Economically it overwhelms the remainder of the Western Hemisphere as merchant and customer. Militarily it has been both protector from foreign aggression and chaperon against what it considered unwise ventures for the Latins. (In this century U.S. troops have entered Cuba, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Honduras, Mexico, and Panama.)

EFFECT OF DISCRIMINATION

Yet something is lacking in the United States-Latin relationship, despite all the formal protestations of "good neighbors," and backslapping businessmen and diplomats. Prof. Frank Tannenbaum of Columbia University, speaking as a 50-year observer, says Americans trying to fathom the resentful feelings of Latins toward the United States fail "to point to the most serious source of our difficulties—the treatment of Latin Americans as inferiors."

Tannenbaum continues: "we are heirs to a tradition about colored people and it influences all of our attitudes, feelings, notions, habits, gestures and verbal expressions about them." The manifestation of Tannenbaum's theory comes in the condescension of businessman, tourist and ambassador alike, and is reciprocated in the sotto voce insult directed at the Yankee's turned back.

The Latin American situation is a product of both history and geography (and here again there are exceptions to general statements applied to the entire region). After Bolivar put to flight the Spanish colonial governors the lack of an effective replacement enabled wealthy caudillos—the upper-class Spanish-parent landowners and merchants—to seize power economically and politically. The caudillos used slave and peon labor to work large haciendas in a system that rivalled, for brutality and impoverishment, the feudal fiefdoms of Dark Ages Europe. Indians and freemen were shunted into the highlands and remote and unarable areas.

TRADITIONAL ARMY ROLE

But the caudillos' power was limited, confined to villages and provinces. The army, as the only force of nationwide scope, was the cohesive that enabled loose confederations of the caudillos to make up a government. The army also slipped into the habit of living off the land by exaction. When the army could not get what it wanted, it simply changed governments, and took for itself extra military functions.

The officer corps gave the illborn the opportunity to achieve power and wealth, and the ranks gave allegiance to the strongest officer-politician in their midst. The intrigue was endless. An officer would muster enough support to seize the presidency, then grab what he could in a hurry and distribute the remainder to his followers. But there was seldom enough to satisfy, prompting new intrigues from which would emerge a new strongman.

Between the independence period of 1820–25 and the First World War the Spanish-American countries experienced 115 successful revolutions and many times that number of abortive revolts.

None resulted in any reforms, however. The caudillos ranged in caliber from tyrant to benevolent despot, and the military did nothing to change them. Writes historian Edwin Lieuwen of the University of New Mexico:

"With the great majority of the population inarticulate, poverty-stricken and politically apathetic, the military were under no popular pressure to change the existing social system, nor did they show any inclination to do so."

Whatever social changes have come have resulted from the sheer weight of the burgeoning urban masses (principally in Brazil and Argentina). Yet the military continues to hold an effective veto power over a majority of Latin governments.

Latin American government may be summed up, "rigid in structure, unstable in personalities."

GEOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND

Geographically, however, conditions are even worse, and South America can best be described as a basket case, a series of isolated nations clinging to the coastline of a hostile continent. A formidable mountain range, the Andes, splits its interior for the entire 4,500-mile north-to-south length, with peaks of up to 23,000 feet. Passes are few and high, 12,000 to 14,000 feet—not trade routes, but precarious scratches through which creep roads, mule tracks and rare railroads.

To Latin America, vastness is synonymous with worthlessness. The Amazon River Basin of Brazil contains 2 million square miles, two-thirds the size of the continental United States. The river system has 40,000 miles of navigable water, and the Amazon itself stretches the equivalent of the distance from New York to Liverpool, England. Yet the basin is a nonproductive hothouse, its rains so heavy they leach the soil of soluble minerals, its temperatures so hot they prevent the buildup of fungi and humus essential to fertility.

Because of the poor transportation created by geographic barriers, South America is a coastal continent, the majority of its people living within 200 miles of the sea. There are no inland counterparts of Chicago, Detroit, or even Kansas City. Thirty of the provincial capitals of Peru, in 1964, had no road contact with the rest of the nation; people live a lifetime in 2-mile-high Andean villages without once descending into modern civilization.

INDIAN POPULATION

The isolation leaves enclaves of unassimilated Indians (14 to 30 million of them, by guess and count), which form non-Spanish-speaking subcultures living apart from the formal structure of the nation. For four centuries the Indians have successfully resisted attempts to make them Europeans or even Latin Americans. Tiny Guatemala, with only 2.7 million persons, has within its cramped borders 21 different Indian groups, descended from the Maya-Quiche tribe. Gen. Lazaro Cardenas, while president of Mexico in 1934–40, said after visiting a tribe of Yaqui Indians: "Somos extranjeros aqui"—we are strangers here.

Despite its vastness, Latin America's third grave handicap is population imbalance. The flap of the stork's wings signal impending disaster for the continent, which has the fastest-growing population of any major subdivision in the world. According to the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA), a U.N. group, between 1953 and 1964 the population increased by 2.8 percent per year, compared with 0.8 percent in Western Europe, 1.67 percent in the United States, and an estimated 2.1 percent in Communist China.

ECLA projects a threefold increase in the population by 2000—meaning 630 million Latins at the dawn of the 21st century, compared with some 69 million in 1900.

In the decade of the 1950's Brazil alone increased by an astonishing 36.5 percent, from 52 to 71 million persons. Some two-thirds of this new growth was in urban areas (19 to 32 million, or 70 percent), four times more than the countryside (33 to 39 million, or 18 percent).

The growth is attributable to better health programs that widened the gap between birth and death rates—DDT, antibiotics, improved sanitation and water supplies. Liberal sexual mores also contribute. Illegitimacy hasn't been frowned upon since the first Portuguese and Spanish colonizers made friends with Indian women. Latin American women marry early and bear often; a 1960 survey by the United Nations found the average Brazilian woman had six live births. El Nacional, leading paper in Venezuela, reported in July that only 20 of 100 births in that country are to married couples.

The affluent United States, with the educational and governmental services structure built during decades of economic boom, is hard-pressed to absorb its population increase—which is minuscule by Latin standards. The new Latins must be squeezed into facilities that are already overcrowded.

BURDEN FOR ALLIANCE

Thomas Mann, President Johnson's chief adviser on Latin America, says of the population spurt:

"This arithmetic has a direct and important bearing on the ability of the American states to achieve the Alliance for Progress goal that the increase in the income of every man, woman and child in the hemisphere shall not be less than 2.5 percent per capita per year."

The composition of the Latin populace, resultantly, is markedly different from the United States. Speaking to a birth-control group recently, Mann noted, "For example, about one-fourth of the population is less than 10 years old. A large portion of the population therefore contributes little to

production; rather, it is essentially a consumer.

"This means that the working force has a heavier burden to bear. Because a higher percentage of production must be consumed on the necessities of life, there is less available to invest in farms and factories that are needed to increase production."

In 1960, the United Nations estimated, the housing deficit in Latin America was 40 million units; this shortage is increasing in proportion to the population boom, despite frantic homebuilding projects under the Alliance for Progress. The Latins also must find teachers and classrooms for another 400 million persons who will pass through childhood between now and 2000. Urban centers, with a 14-percent average annual growth rate, must provide transportation, streets, electricity, sewerage.

A NEW SOCIETY

Thus, then, is posed the Latin dilemma: A continent aware of its shortcomings and misery, and groping for a solution. Three pathways, appear open to Latin leaders, each overlapping the other in part, and each with the same goal, a new society.

The makeup of that new society—and one is coming, most Latin American scholars agree—is the crucial question, from the U.S. point of view. The paths reaching toward it are communism and/or state socialism; rebuilding under the Alliance for Progress, with U.S. leadership, in fact if not in form; or a uniquely Latin creation of a new force, neither pure democracy nor pure socialism, but one which can cope with the problems of a continent. In order, here is an assessment of the present status and future of each path.

Communism is not a newcomer to Latin America. Parties were formed there as long ago as 1918, generally on the periphery of the labor movement. In 1935 the Reds were strong enough in Brazil to attempt a coup, which collapsed in 1 day. But only in the last decade has the Red influence among Latins become a concern to the United States. In 1954 the Central Intelligence Agency was instrumental in overthrowing a Communist-alined government in Guatemala which was importing arms from Soviet-bloc nations.

The Communists got their strongest foothold beginning in 1959, when guerrillas led by Fidel Castro, then 32 years old, overthrew Cuban dictator Fulgencio Batista. The Castro regime started as a broad-based popular front, but soon disintegrated into a Communist movement. As Castro set about remolding Cuban society he alienated first, American business interest on the island, secondly, the U.S. Government, and finally, broad sections of the middle and upper classes who had aided his revolution against the corrupt Batista.

TRAPPINGS OF COMMUNISM

The CIA this time wasn't successful in its attempt to toss out a Red government. Cuban exiles, organized and armed by the CIA, attempted an invasion of Cuba in April, 1961, but were repulsed by Castro's militia and army. Some 1,200 men were captured, to be ransomed a year later in exchange for drugs and medicines. In May 1961, Castro declared he was a Marxist and Cuba took on the trappings of a Communist state, with the hammer and sickle flying over public buildings and Soviet-bloc weapons in the hands of its soldiers and militiamen.

Externally, Fidel Castro's strategy has been consistent since 1950—that of converting the Andes into the "Sierra Maestra of the Americas," alluding to the mountain range which sheltered his 2-year-long guerrilla war against Batista's numerically superior army. Castro's tactics, however, have reflected sophisticated flexibility.

In the first 6 months of 1959, flushed with his triumph over Batista, Castro hurled armed expeditions against several other Caribbean countries also ruled by military strongmen. All failed, and the Organization of American States, the regional peacekeeping group, slapped Castro's wrists. Castro then launched upon a different tack, subtler in tone. The State Department lists four main channels for his activity:

The formation of front groups both in the United States and Latin America in the guise of friendship societies or committees for the defense of the Cuban revolution. Lee Harvey Oswald, the assassin of President Kennedy, was a member of one of these fronts, the Fair Play for Cuba Committee.

An intensive propaganda program, using Prensa Latina, a Cuban news wire service, and powerful radio transmitters. One broadcast series, "Radio Free Dixie," is aimed at southern Negroes in the United States.

Covert material support, largely financial, to subversive groups abroad, is funneled in through diplomatic corridors. Small boats from Cuba also haul arms to revolutionists in other Latin countries, principally Venezuela.

Indoctrination and training of hundreds of Latin Americans in Cuba, including schooling in sabotage, terrorism, and guerrilla tactics. The trainees, mostly in their late teens and twenties, go to Cuba via Prague ostensibly to study agricultural or industrial techniques. Once there, however, they are put through realistic offensive and defensive exercises, taught how to survive in the jungles and given weapons and map instruction. They are also schooled in the art of infiltrating and subverting student, labor, and other groups in their own countries.

TERROR IN VENEZUELA

Edwin M. Martin, former Latin American expert in the State Department, said in a talk on this problem, "Venezuelans seem to be the most numerous national group among these trainees, and we do not consider it sheer coincidence that Venezuela's democratic government and the Venezuelan people are being subjected most heavily to the terrorist and guerrilla activities of the Castro Communists in that country."

Cuba's technique for Latin insurrectionists is based on three premises:

A guerrilla band, by its very existence, can create a revolutionary situation where none existed previously. Peasants, not urban workers, make up the revolutionary force in Latin America. (Here Cuba differs from the Soviet concept and alines with the Communist Chinese, who support agrarian rather than urban revolution.) Lastly, a guerrilla band can whip a regular army.

COUNTERING CASTRO

The State Department, as a matter of national policy, works briskly to counter Castro's export of revolution. And it claims considerable success in the United States attempts to weaken and discredit the Cuban Government.

The October 1962, crisis, in which former Soviet Premier Khrushchev capitulated to President Kennedy and withdrew potentially offensive missiles, "proved to be of inestimable value in unmasking the Castro regime, previously regarded by many as a model for a new Latin American revolution, as just one more tool of Moscow." The confrontation displayed that the then-Soviet leadership was not ready to risk nuclear war to protect Latin comrades.

(In the framework of the Sino-Soviet policy split, the backdown was costly to the Soviets. The Venezuelan Communist Party, for instance, immediately switched to a policy of revolution through violence, as advocated by the Chinese, rather than revolution through political change, as advocated by the Soviets. There were similar splinters of the Reds from Soviet to Chinese orientation in Brazil, Peru, Bolivia, Ecuador, and Chile.)

The State Department also claims it is gradually bankrupting Cuba, saying, "The ineptitude of Cuban leaders, coupled with the success of our efforts to deprive Cuba of access to the industrialized markets of the free world, has brought about serious economic deterioration in the island." The United States won't trade with Cuba; ships from other nations which call there aren't admitted to U.S. ports. Nonetheless, United States allies such as Great Britain and Canada trade regularly with Fidel Castro, and he uses the economic shortages as a rallying point for anti-U.S. propaganda.

ANTIGUERRILLA TRAINING

To help Latin governments protect themselves against Castro terrorists and subversion, the United States trains military and police personnel in riot control and counter-guerrilla tactics. These courses are given at U.S. military schools at Fort Gulick, in the Canal Zone of Panama, and at Fort Bragg, N.C.

Martin noted, however, that guns and police aren't the sole antidote for Castroism. "Theoretically we could put vast amounts of arms and riot equipment into Latin American hands today (he was talking in 1963) to stamp out rebellion and to shoot down the Communist leaders and followers. But into whose hands would we put these arms? How can we be sure that the riot quellers of today will not be the rioters tomorrow? What good are arms and security controls in a permanently unstable society?"

(Martin was prophetic. During the last year a sizable portion of the Guatemalan Army has been tied down fighting a guerrilla leader named Marco Antonio Yon Sosa, head of the Movimiento Revolucionario 13 de Noviembre—MR-13. Yon Sosa, who is opposing the military rule of Col. Enrique Peralta Azurdia, is a graduate of the U.S. anti-guerrilla school at Fort Gulick.)

DOMINICAN INTERVENTION

The existence of a Communist state only 90 miles south of Florida is a political embarrassment to the United States and one which it doesn't want to see repeated elsewhere. For that reason President Johnson responded quickly last April when he got information, later questioned, that Communists threatened to take control of a revolt in the Dominican Republic. He dispatched 18,000 U.S. marines and soldiers in a unilateral action which was roundly denounced by other intervention-wary Latin states.

The State Department's generally alarmist view of Communist subversion in Latin America isn't universally accepted by other authorities. Juan Bosch, the only freely elected president in the history of the Dominican Republic (he was thrown out by a coup in September 1963, 9 months after he took office) claims rightists use the word "communism" as a tarbrush with which to smear opponents. Bitter over the U.S. intervention in his country, Bosch wrote in Saturday Review last summer:

"Today there has spread over the countries of America a fear of communism that is leading us all to kill democracy for fear that democracy is the mask of communism." Bosch maintains that a democratic society, and its accompanying guarantees of freedom, ultimately will smother communism.

Another dissenter is Ernst Halperin, research associate at the center for international studies at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, who says flatly that the chances of a Communist-dominated regime are slim indeed in Latin America.

Halperin supports his thesis with conclusions that differ sharply from the popular image of Latin America. The poverty-plenty contrast, while frightening to the outsider, isn't necessarily the harbinger of social cataclysm, Halperin maintains.

Why? Halperin argues: The city slums are many cuts above the rural poverty from

whence came their inhabitants. Despite the squalor, there are health centers and other social services, and also chances for jobs and eventual homeownership.

Strong unions on the docks and in the railroads and oil fields, have created a relatively well-paid middle class which acts as a counterbalance to Communist agitation. Marxism, which calls for the overthrow of the existing order as a means of improving man's lot, has a hollow ring. The slum dwellers, according to Halperin (who studied them firsthand for 2 years), are more comfortable than they were on the farm, and "cannot be made to believe that revolution is necessary to achieve the further material improvements they desire * * * they are realists on the lookout for material improvement, and in politics they tend to support the man who is in a position to provide such improvement, even if he is a dictator or a politician with an unsavory record."

Halperin cites results of three recent elections to question the Communists' appeal in the slums: the 1963 Peruvian presidential race, where the slum districts of Lima, worst in Latin America, voted for Gen. Manuel Odria, most conservative of four candidates; the Venezuelan presidential election a few months later, when Arturo Uslar Pietri, conservative intellectual and business candidate, got a majority of the Caracas slum votes; and in Chile, in 1964, when Christian Democrat Eduardo Frei Montalva won over Marxist Salvador Allende in the Santiago and Valparaiso slums.

GUERRILLAS' ADVANTAGE

The great imponderable, however, is the future of the scattered guerrilla bands such as that led by Yon Sosa in Guatemala. Ralph Sanders, associate professor of political science at the College of the Armed Forces, wrote recently: "The available evidence indicates that insurgents can operate with relatively little popular support. The assistance of a fraction of the population to provide sustenance and intelligence is sufficient as long as the remainder of the local inhabitants do not actively oppose him."

Roger Hilsman, former Director of Intelligence and Research for the State Department, led an effective partisan movement in Burma during the Second World War with 10 percent of the people pro-West, 10 percent procnemy, and the rest "indifferent or turned inward toward their own family and village." The latter category encompasses much of rural Latin America today.

The four largest Communist parties in Latin America (exclusive of Cuba, where membership is estimated at 35,000) are Argentina (60,000 to 70,000), Brazil (30,000, plus 150,000 to 200,000 sympathizers), Chile (25,000 to 30,000) and Venezuela (30,000).

Mere numbers, however, aren't the sole yardstick of Communist influence. Communists helped keep alive the anti-United States turmoil in Panama in early 1964 over whether flags of both Panama and the United States should be displayed in the Canal Zone. The Communist-influenced tin miners' union in Bolivia has kept that unhappy nation in chaos for more than a year. The danger in Communist intermingling with any movement feeding on emotionalism is that the Reds could be hurled into leadership if established order collapses.

ALLIANCE FOR PROGRESS

Put concisely, the Alliance for Progress is (or was) an attempt by the United States to "assist free men and free governments in casting off the chains of poverty" in Latin America, using President Kennedy's inaugural address phraseology. The Latin nations (excepting Cuba) signed the charter of the Alliance August 17, 1961, in Punta del Este, a Uruguayan resort town. The cost over a decade was put at $100 billion, of which the United States would provide $10 billion in public funds. Hopefully, U.S. private industry would put $10 billion additional into Latin America.

The U.S. dollars, as Mr. Kennedy put it, were to satisfy the basic needs of the Latin American people for homes, work and land, health and schools. With this help the Alliance planners hoped the Latin nations would be able to increase their industrialization to the level of that of Western Europe. Their target was a 2.5 percent increase in the gross national product.

The dollars had strings tied to them when they went southward. Unless Latin governments agreed to tax the local tycoons on a realistic scale (and actually make collections), and carve up nonproductive haciendas, no money.

The scent of U.S. money was ignored by dictatorships in Paraguay, Haiti, Ecuador, Bolivia and Guatemala; government vanished altogether in the Dominican Republic last April 24 and didn't reappear until September. The idealism of the Alliance didn't take into account the preference any incumbent Latin power has for the status quo.

To Latins, the Alliance's disappointment is doubly biting because they expected so much from it.

RELUCTANT INVESTORS

Business has shied from investment in Latin America, reflecting fears both of governmental instability and of Communist terrorists who regularly blast U.S. oil installations in Venezuela. The no-compensation expropriation of U.S. properties by Fidel Castro is a raw memory for U.S. businessmen. Latins themselves prefer to send their extra dollars to the United States or Europe for safekeeping or investment.

Of the 17 countries which signed the Alliance charter, only 7 met the 2.5 percent growth goal in 1964. But one of the seven, Bolivia, was gripped with political chaos, and another, Argentina, still shows a 1.1 percent decrease for the past 6 years. In the last decade the Latin share of exported goods on the world market slumped from 11 to 6 percent.

There is a semblance of compliance in some nations with a key pledge of the Alliance charter: "To reform tax laws, demanding more from those who have the most, to punish tax evasion severely, and to redistribute the national income in order to benefit those who are most in need." Guatemala, although run by a military clique, took in $9 million the first year a graduated income tax was in effect. Peru is giving 511,000 acres of Andean land to 14 Indian communities built upon it.

Yet several Latin authorities now maintain that the United States violated the basic principle of the Alliance by its intervenion in the Dominician crisis in the spring. Joseph Grunwald of the Brookings Institution, a nonpartisan Washington research institute, said of this:

"There is no more pretense. The Alliance is dead in some countries already. It's just another aid program. For intellectuals, it's dead as a revolutionary image." Even rightists "can't tell the difference between our response there and that of Communists in a similar situation."

RIGHT OF DEFENSE

Latins opposed to the Dominican intervention cite article 15 of the charter of the Organization of American States, to which the United States is a signatory: "No state or group of states has the right to intervene, directly or indirectly, for any reason whatever, in the internal or external affairs of any other state. The foregoing principle prohibits not only armed forces but also any other form of interference or attempted threat against the personality of the state or against its political, economic and cultural elements."

Another OAS treaty, however, gives member states the right to defend each other against an armed attack from outside. Adolf Berle, U.S. negotiator when this treaty was signed, says a "coup" aided and abetted from outside is considered an armed attack, and give rise to the right of defense by other nations.

The State Department's Thomas Mann thinks the Alliance is beginning to make headway, opinions of other observers notwithstanding. In his 1964 report to President Johnson he spoke of a "new unity of purpose in making the Alliance not just a statement of goals but a reality."

Mann also threw in a line which Latins upset over the Dominican intervention might find puzzling: "We need better understanding of the impediments to progress and a greater will to sacrifice short-term political advantages and personal gain so that solid and enduring foundations of progress in freedom can be laid."

A THIRD FORCE

What, then, is the alternative path that Latin Americans can choose instead of Castroism or the Alliance for Progress?

Observers see a dynamic third force making itself felt—Christian Democracy, which has as its tenets the Papal encyclicals advocating social and economic justice for the underprivileged masses of the developing nations.

The Social Democrats, in 1964, won the presidency of Chile when Eduardo Frei Montalva beat a Marxist candidate; they are also strong and growing in Venezuela, Peru, Brazil, and Argentina. The party has common interests with the Roman Catholic Church, but it is not a church movement. Leadership in social reform by young Catholic priests in Latin America gives the church a bond with the Christian Democrats—yet similar support comes from the Latin American Episcopal Church.

Christian Democracy is both an alternative and a safety valve. It permits young university students to be critical of the existing order (even capitalism) without reverting to the extreme of communism.

Frei's motto in Chile, for instance, was "Revolution with Liberty," and he has been carrying out left-of-center policies which mesh the Alliance for Progress with Chilean ideas about the future of their hemisphere. To Latin Americans Christian Democracy stands as a "solution" that is essentially Latin American—suited to their history, temperament and special conditions.

The growth of Christian Democracy bears out beliefs of men such as Ernst Halperin that communism has no spiritual appeal to Latins, and of such men as Tannenbaum that the existing order will not change itself.

MEXICAN SYSTEM

But even Christian Democracy pales in comparison to the unique Mexican system of government, which combines elements of democracy, socialism and aristocracy. Frank Brandenburg of American University, writing in Orbis, called the Mexican power structure simply, "The revolutionary family."

The usual head of the family is the president, assisted by about 20 favorite sons—national and regional politicians, wealthy individuals, some labor leaders and intellectuals. There are subgroups of business, the professions, the press, veterans' groups, and the government bureaucracy itself. The head of the family, by dint of defining the relative power of these vested interests, names the President, who serves for a sole 6-year term. (The election is through the machinery of the Party of Revolutionary Institutions or PRI, which collects more than 90 percent of the vote in any national balloting.) The president, in effect a dictator for 6 years, names state and municipal heads and has a rubber-stamp legislature at his service.

Economically, the revolutionary family permits a mixture of state ownership and private enterprise, and a social welfare system unsurpassed anywhere else in Latin America. Brandenburg writes, "Parochial and

splintered interests are submerged in the larger unity of nationhood. * * * Motivated by a deep sense of pride in his nationality, the Mexican fuses patriotism with humanism in a way that redounds to the common and individual good."

The state, for instance, owns the oil and electric power industries and railroad and telegraph systems; slaughterhouses and public marketplaces. Public and private ownership compete in steel, paper, chemicals and electrical products. Private enterprise has as its preserve the hotel, glass and aluminum industries, among others.

The ruling elite is dedicated to social progress—but "keep its feet on firm political, social and economic ground when issues concerning expansion of social security benefits, labor rights and public welfare measures are at stake."

Mexicans are fond of saying that other Latin nations would benefit from following its system, but Brandenburg maintains this is not necessarily true. The main point, he suggests, is that "Mexico found a workable solution based on its own inheritance and on its need and realities. This is the key to development elsewhere in Latin America."